

TWIN SPICA

Kou Yaginuma

1

A Publishers Weekly Big Graphic Novels of 2010 Selection

TWIN SPICA

1


Kou Yaginuma





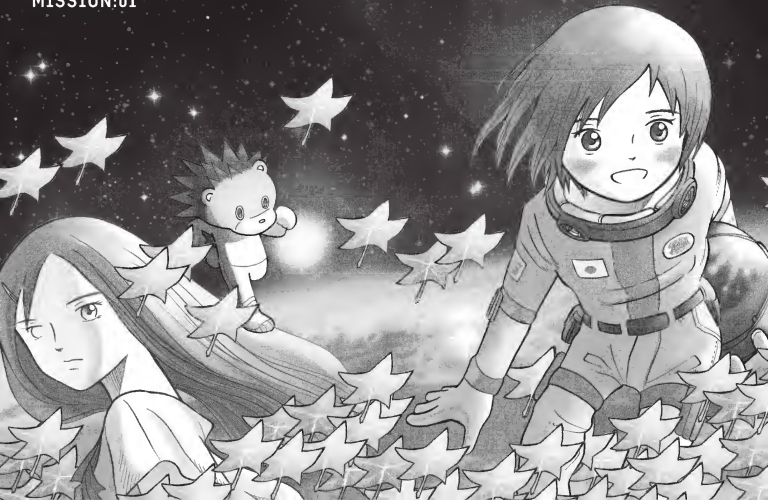
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AS MY VISION
FADED TO
BLACK,
I THOUGHT
I SAW
A TINY STAR.





AND JAPAN'S—

THERE ARE 3 MAJOR TRAGEDIES THAT MAR THE HISTORY OF SPACE TRAVEL: THE APOLLO 1 FIRE, THE CHALLENGER'S EXPLOSION,

1961: THE SOVIET UNION LAUNCHES THE FIRST MANNED SPACESHIP.

1969: APOLLO 11 MAKES MANKIND'S FIRST LUNAR LANDING.



NO CLUE.

WHAT IS THAT GIRL GOING ON ABOUT?



YOU
USED TO
BE AN
ASTRONAUT,
RIGHT?
WERE
THE TESTS
HARD?

NONE OF THE
QUESTIONS
YOU THOUGHT
UP WERE
ON THE TEST,
THOUGH.

HOW WAS
YOUR
1ST-LEVEL
EXAM FOR
THE SPACE
SCHOOL,
LITTLE
ONE?

IT WAS
HARD, BUT
I GOT
ALL THE
SPACE
HISTORY
QUESTIONS
RIGHT.

HA HA HA!

BACK THEN,
JAPAN'S
ASTRONAUT
TRAINING WAS
STILL AT AN
EARLY STAGE.

NO,
NOTHING
TOO HARD.

BUT
I GUESS
OUTER
SPACE
SEEMS
A LITTLE
CLOSER
NOW.

MANKIND
HASN'T
CHANGED
MUCH
SINCE
THEN,

GOING UP
IN A SPACESHIP
AS A TEENAGER
WAS
UNTHINKABLE.

OF COURSE
THERE
WEREN'T
ANY SPACE
SCHOOLS.



HOWEVER,
72 SECONDS
AFTER TAKE-OFF,
THE LIQUID FUEL IN
THE BOOSTERS
CAUGHT FIRE.

THE SPACE CENTER
WAS UNABLE TO
ACTIVATE THE
"FLIGHT STOP SYSTEM"
THAT WOULD EXPLODE
THE ROCKET MID-FLIGHT.

"THE LION"
CRASHED IN
THE MIDDLE
OF A CITY.
MANY INNOCENT
CIVILIANS
WERE KILLED
OR INJURED.



IN 2010,
ASUMI WAS
1 YEAR OLD.

THAT
SAME YEAR,
JAPAN LAUNCHED
ITS FIRST
ENTIRELY
JAPAN-MADE
MANNED
SPACECRAFT,
"THE LION."



JUST
RIGHT
FOR
ME,
ASUMI.

THIS
IS

I
DUNNO
...

THIS IS
JUST
FINE.

PRESS
PRESS

YOU'RE
THE
PERFECT
WEIGHT.



AND
JUST
WHO
IS
GONNA
PAY
FOR
SUCH
A
THING?

WE
SHOULD
BUY
A
MASSAGE
CHAIR!

PRESS
PRESS



MISS
KAMOGAWA,

YOU
CAN'T
BE
SERIOUS!





I KNOW
YOU WANT
TO BE AN
ASTRONAUT
...

2024
Tokyo Space School
Annual Entrance
Application

AND HOW
WILL YOU
COMMUTE
FROM ALL
THE WAY
OUT IN THE
COUNTRYSIDE?

IT'S
A PUBLIC
SCHOOL,
BUT IT'S
PRETTY
EXPENSIVE

トントン
TAP TAP

AND
YOU'RE
THE
SMALLEST
IN YOUR
CLASS.

BUT
THERE ARE
MANY
THINGS
THAT ARE
TOUGH
FOR A
GIRL.

IT'S
JUST YOU
AND
YOUR
FATHER
AT HOME
NOW?

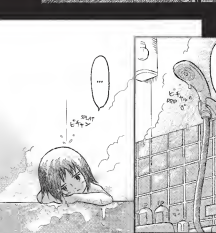
YOUR
MOTHER
PASSED
AWAY
WHEN
YOU
WERE
VERY
YOUNG,
RIGHT?

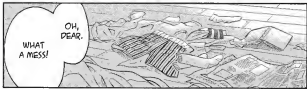
SO...

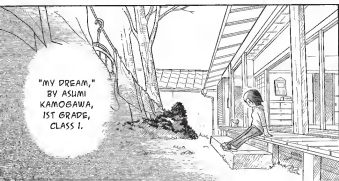
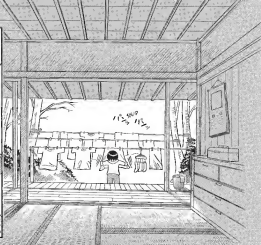
THEY HAVE
DORMS
FOR
STUDENTS
WHO NEED
THEM.



IF YOU WERE
ACCEPTED
TO THE
SCHOOL,







DUMMY!
YOU DON'T SAY
IT'S "DRIVER"
"PILOT" FOR
ROCKETS.



I WANT TO
DRIVE EVERYONE
TO LOTS OF STARS
AND PLANETS ON
MY ROCKET.

I WANT
TO BE
A DRIVER
ON A
ROCKET.



わいは
うはは
I'LL LET
MY DAD AND
MR. LION
ON BOARD
FOR FREE.



WHAT
IS IT
?

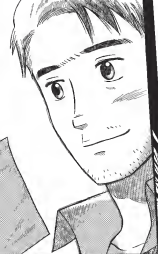
IT'S
FOR
YOU!



DADDY
!

THANK
YOU.

1ST GRADE CLASS 1
ASARI KAYOKAWA







NEVER
EVEN
THINKING
ABOUT
THE STAR'S
TRUE
SIZE.

PEOPLE
GO
ABOUT
THEIR
DAYS

YOU CAN'T
KNOW HOW
POWERFUL
IT IS UNTIL
YOU'VE SEEN
IT WITH YOUR
OWN EYES.



IT'S
THE
SAME

WITH
PEOPLE,
TOO.













OR EVEN
BECAUSE
YOU DIDN'T
TELL HIM
ANYTHING.



ASUMI
...
YOUR
DAD
WASN'T
ANGRY

BECAUSE
YOU TOOK
THE TEST
ON YOUR
OWN,



BECAUSE
THE LITTLE
GIRL WHO
USED TO
TALK
ABOUT
HER DREAMS
WAS
VANISHED.



HE WAS
ANGRY











ALL OUR
FURNITURE,
THE HOUSE,
EVEN
THE LAND
IT STANDS
ON.

I DON'T
CARE
IF WE
HAVE TO
SELL OFF

IF THAT'S
WHAT'S
NEEDED
TO MAKE
YOU
HAPPY.

I DON'T
CARE
HOW HARD
I HAVE
TO WORK



I STILL
HAVE
THE LETTER

AS
LONG
AS
I HAVE
THAT
...

THAT YOU
GAVE ME
ALL THOSE
YEARS AGO.



YOUR
DREAMS

ARE MY
GREATEST
TREASURE

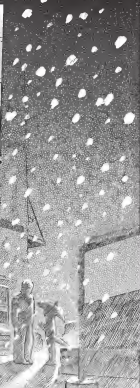
To Dad -
1 free pass on
Asumi's rocket

Asumi

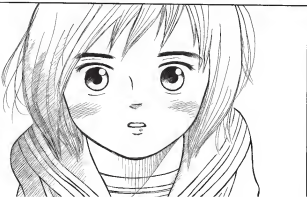
Dad

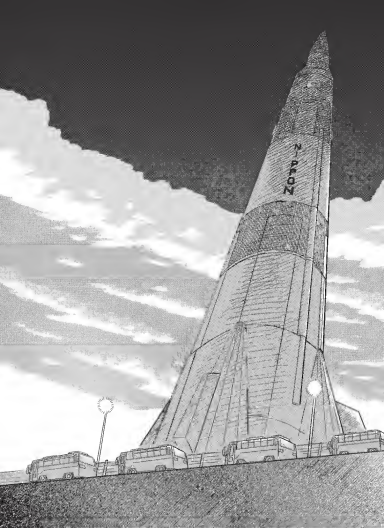


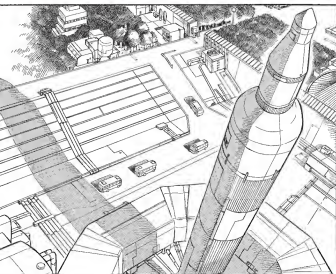
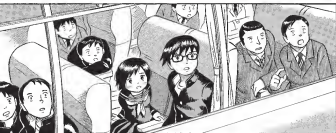
WOULD
ALL
QUALIFYING
CANDIDATES
PLEASE GO
TO THE
FOLLOWING
LOCATION
...

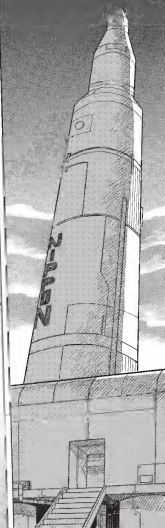












MISSION:02





ALL EXAMINEES
WILL BE
PLACED
INTO THE
TEMPORARY
HOUSING
MODULE

TO TEST YOUR
ADAPTABILITY
TO A
CLOSED-OFF,
SEALED
ENVIRONMENT.

WHAT
THE
HECK'S
GOING
ON?

THEY'RE
MAKING US
DO A
PRACTICAL
TEST
NOW?!

...

THEY'RE
TRYING
TO
ABITATE
US.

HARD
TO BELIEVE
THIS IS
LAST-MINUTE.
IT'S TOO
WELL-
PLANNED.

WE WILL
EXPLAIN THE
OUTLINE OF
THE NEW TEST
ONCE EVERYONE
IS IN THEIR
DESIGNATED
ROOM.

PLEASE GO
TO YOUR
ASSIGNED ROOM
AFTER YOU
HAVE
FINISHED
CHANGING.

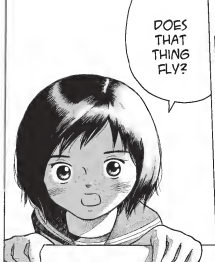
WHEN YOU
HAND IN
YOUR EXAM
TICKET
YOU WILL
RECEIVE
A UNIFORM.

UHM
...

WELL,
I...

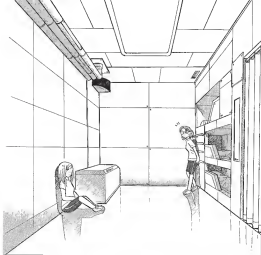
WELL
THEN
...

ANYONE
HAVE ANY
QUESTIONS
ABOUT WHAT
I'VE JUST
SAID?











AH,
I'M 14.
JUST
MADE
THE CUT-
OFF.

WE'RE
THE
SAME
YEAR?

THAT'S
NOT
WHAT I
MEANT.



I'M
ASUMI.

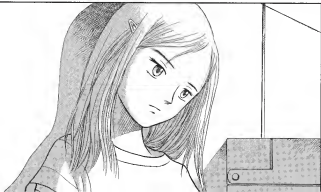
ASUMI
KAMO-
GAWA.

028



I'M NOT
GOOD
WITH THAT
TYPE.

OH,
I DON'T
KNOW
HER
NAME.
SHE'S
KINDA
HARD
TO TALK
TO.





BEFORE
YOU
SHAKE
ANYONE'S
HAND.

SINCE WE'RE
TO BE
SEALED UP
IN HERE,
FIRST YOU
NEED TO
WASH UP

SO ALL THE DIRT
AND BACTERIA
FROM THOSE
PEOPLE IS
NOW ON
YOUR HAND.

OH

YOU JUST
TOUCHED
THE
DOOR-
KNOB.

ABOUT
10 PEOPLE
BEFORE YOU
TOUCHED THE
SAME KNOB.

YOU HELD
ONTO IT
FOR A
GOOD
15
SECONDS.

05

THERE'S
NO NEED
TO BE
SO RUDE!

HEY,
LISTEN
HERE!

...

*
B
E
E
P
*

!!

SHAAA

SORRY
ABOUT
THAT!

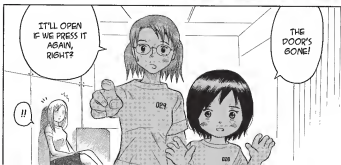
OH,

IT'S
FINE.

PLEASE CONFIRM
THAT ALL
3 EXAMINEES ARE
IN THE ROOM,
THEN PRESS
THE RED BUTTON
NEXT TO THE DOOR
JUST ONCE.

アタタタ
ROLL ROLL

WE ARE
STARTING THE
CLOSED-OFF
ENVIRONMENT
ADAPTABILITY
TEST.



NOW
WE WILL
EXPLAIN
THE TEST.

WHIA-
?

BRR

THEY
DIDN'T
TELL US
TO PRESS IT
TWICE!

THE
TEST'S
BEGIN!

USE
YOUR
HEAD
FOR
ONCE!

WHAT
ARE
YOU
DOING
?!

IN
HERE?

7
DAYS
?!

EACH ROOM
HAS 1 TEAM
CONSISTING
OF
3 PEOPLE.

SHUT IT!
I CAN'T
HEAR!

ANY

WITH NO
CLOTHING,
FOOD
OR EVEN
A SHOWER?
NO WAY

YOU
WILL BE
IN THESE
SEALED
ROOMS
TOGETHER
FOR
7 DAYS.

YOU
WILL WORK
AS A TEAM TO
COMPLETE AN
ASSIGNMENT
DURING
THIS TIME.

YOU WILL
NOT SIMPLY
SIT AROUND
FOR
7 DAYS.

WHAT
?

HERE
THEY
ARE!

THERE IS
FOOD AND
CLOTHING
FOR 7 DAYS
NEXT TO
THE BEDS.
PLEASE
CONFIRM.

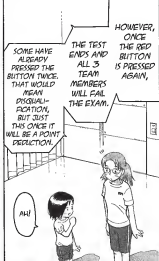
AT 9 P.M.
THE LIGHTS
WILL AUTO-
MATICALLY
SHUT OFF.

IF AT ANYTIME
YOU MUST END
THE ASSIGNMENT
DUE TO PHYSICAL
OR MENTAL
STRESS OR
SOME OTHER
REASON,

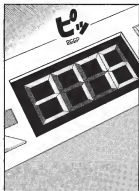
PRESS
THE RED
BUTTON
ONCE MORE.
THE DOOR
WILL OPEN.

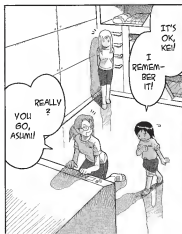
THE
MATERIALS
NEEDED
FOR YOUR
ASSIGNMENT
ARE IN THE
WHITE BOX
IN THE
ROOM.

YOU MUST
INPUT YOUR
ROOM
NUMBER
INTO
THE BOX
TO UNLOCK
IT.
YOU
HAVE
JUST
1 CHANCE
TO ENTER
THE
NUMBER,
SO BE
CAREFUL.

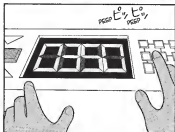


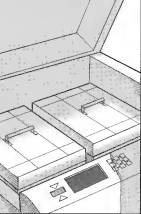














DOE-ZOON.

WHAT
THE...

HUM?



THAT THE MOST
IMPORTANT QUALITIES
AN ASTRONAUT
NEEDS ARE
PERSEVERANCE AND
A COOPERATIVE
PERSONALITY.

MR. LION
SAID

WITH
THIS TEST.



THAT'S
WHAT
THEY'RE
LOOKING
FOR





THESE
BEDS
SURE ARE
SQUEEZED
IN TIGHT.



OH,
WHEN.
I
GUESS
IT'S
BED-
TIME.



ブウオン
BWON

ACK!



MARIKA
LIKITA.



IT'S WEIRD
TO ASK
HER NOW.
THINK OF
A GOOD
NICKNAME
FOR HER!

AH!

HEY, WE STILL
DON'T KNOW
THAT GIRL'S
NAME!



PINNY
...?

LET'S
CALL
HER
PINNY
...

LIHM
...
WELL
SHE HAS
A CUTE
HAIR
PIN.





MR. LION
TAUGHT IT
TO ME
LONG
AGO.

OUR ROOM
NUMBER IS
THE DISTANCE
TO MY
FAVORITE
STAR.

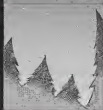


IT IS
3360 LIGHT
YEARS AWAY.

SPICA,
ALSO KNOWN
AS ALPHA VIRGILIS,
IS THE
BRIGHTEST STAR
IN THE VIRGO
CONSTELLATION.



AH!
I FOUND
SPICA!



THERE ARE
ACTUALLY
TWO STARS
THAT SPIN
ALONG
THE SAME
ORBIT.

YUP,
A BINARY
STAR.

BUT FROM
HERE ON
EARTH,
IT LOOKS LIKE
THERE'S
JUST ONE BIG,
BRIGHT STAR.

BINARY
?

COMES
FROM
THE TWIN
SPICA
STARS.

THAT
BEAUTIFUL
BRILLIANCE

WHAT'S
WRONG
LITTLE
ONE?

HME?

THEY'LL
CONTINUE
SHINING
LIKE THAT

UNTIL
ONE
OR THE
OTHER
VANISHES



YOU'LL
ALWAYS BE
WITH ME?

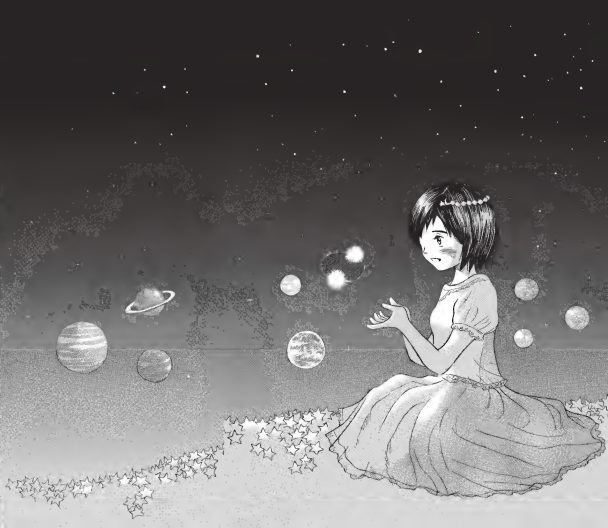
MR. LION,
YOU'RE NOT
GONNA VANISH,
RIGHT?



I
WILL.

AS LONG AS
THE STARS
ARE IN
THE SKY.

MISSION:03



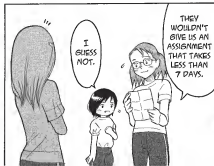


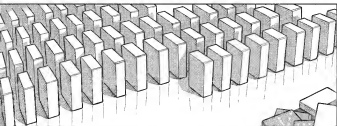


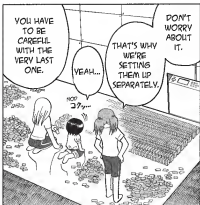
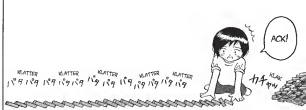


4412

















WHO
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?

"OBVI-
OUSLY"
?

I DON'T
CARE TO
TELL YOU

OH.

OK.

ブル
コン

WELL, WHY
ARE YOU
TAKING
THE EXAM?

HMM?

0350

THAT
PHOTO THAT
ARMSTRONG
TOOK OF
THE LUNAR
LANDING—



MADE ME
FEEL LIKE
I WAS RIGHT
THERE ON
THE MOON.

I WAS
JUST A KID,
BUT IT MADE
AN
IMPRESSION.

THE SHOT OF
BUZZ ALDRIN
ON THE
EDGE OF
A CRATER,

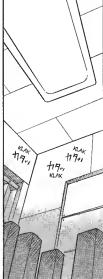
MAN'S
FIRST STEP,
THE EARTH
RISING
OVER THE
HORIZON...

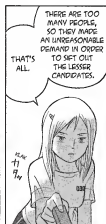


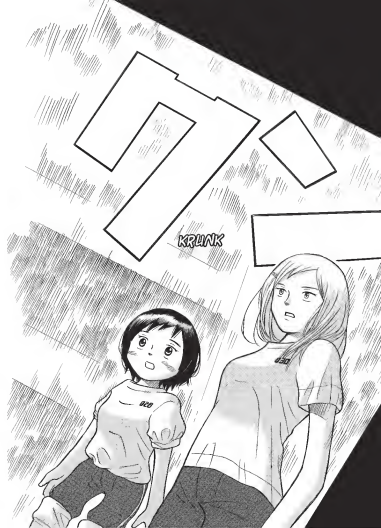
I WANTED TO
GO TO
THE MOON AND
TAKE PICS OF
THE EARTH
ABOVE!

ONCE I SAW
THOSE IMAGES
I COULD
HARDLY
CONTAIN MY
EXCITEMENT.















OH,
SO
THAT'S
IT...



WHAT
THE
HECK
WAS
THAT
?





IT WAS A
DEPRESSURI-
ZATION
TEST.

I
THINK



ON TOP
OF THAT,
ALL THE
DOMINOES
FELL...

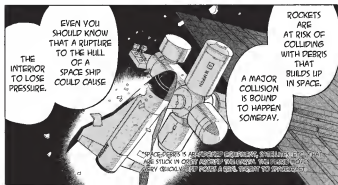
I FEEL
NAUSEOUS.
MY TEETH
HURT.



IT'S
PART
OF THE
EXAM.

AN
ACCIDENT
?

DEPRESSURI-
ZATION?



THE
INTERIOR
TO LOSE
PRESSURE.

EVEN YOU
SHOULD KNOW
THAT A RUPTURE
TO THE HULL
OF A
SPACE SHIP
COULD CAUSE

A MAJOR
COLLISION
IS BOUND
TO HAPPEN
SOMEDAY.

ROCKETS
ARE
AT RISK OF
COLLIDING
WITH DEBRIS
THAT
BUILDS UP
IN SPACE.

SPACE DEBRIS IS A GROWING PROBLEM, AND IT'S NOT THAT
ANY STUCK IN ORBIT AFTER COLLISIONS. THE SPACE DEBRIS
IS VERY DANGEROUS FOR A SHIP TRYING TO SPACECRAFT



ASUMI?
アッ



YEAH,
BUT THIS
TEST WENT
TOO FAR!

SHINJI
3.5...



IF YOU'RE
NOT ABLE
TO KEEP
YOUR COOL
UNDER SUCH
CONDITIONS

YOU CAN'T
BE AN
ASTRO-
NAUT.



ASUMI,
WHAT'S
WRONG?

UGH.

WHY
ARE YOU
TREMBLING
?



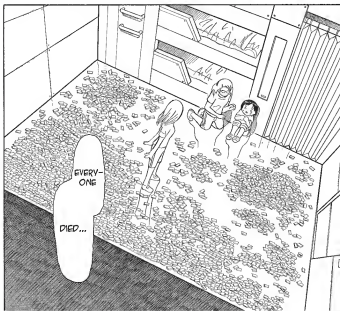
ASUMI...

AH!



HEY,
WAKE
UP!

ASUMI
!!

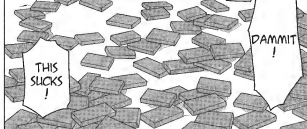






MISSION:04







SEE?
IT JUST
MOVED.



YOU CAN
JUST
MAKE OUT
THE LENS.

IF YOU
SQUINT

WHAT
FOR
?

PROB-
ABLY.

YOU MEAN
THEY'VE BEEN
WATCHING
THIS WHOLE
TIME?!

THAT'S
WHAT
THE
SCHOOL'S
MOST
INTERESTED
IN.

THINK
ABOUT IT.
THEY WANT
TO SEE HOW
3 STRANGERS
CAN GET
ALONG
IN SUCH
A PLACE.

THIS IS
SUPPOSED
TO BE A
SEALED ENVIRON-
MENT ADAPT-
ABILITY
TEST, RIGHT?

I SEE...
THE DOMINOES
WERE A
DISTRACTION.

WHADDYA
MEAN?

IT'S NOT
ABOUT
HOW MANY
DOMINOES
WE LINE UP.

THEY'RE
TESTING OUR
ABILITY TO
BE SHUT IN
FOR 7 DAYS.

RIGHT
!







FRIENDS
WITH
YOU
!!

ASUMI
SAID

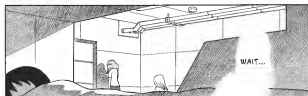
SHE
WANTS
TO BE



BUT
ALL YOU
CARE
ABOUT
ARE THESE
STUPID
DOMINOES
!

YOU
THINK
THAT'LL
MAKE
YOU A
BETTER
PILOT
?!







HEY,
DAD?

WHY
DOESN'T
MOM
COME
HOME
?



WHAT
ARE YOU
LOOKING
AT?

MOM...?

WHY IS
YUIGAHAMA
ON FIRE
?



MR. LION

WHY
DO YOU
LOOK SO
SAD?



IT'S ME,
ASUMI.

MOM.



BE
RIGHT
HERE.

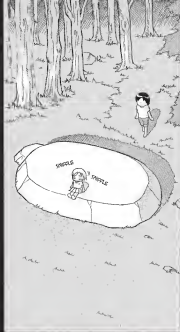
I'LL
ALWAYS



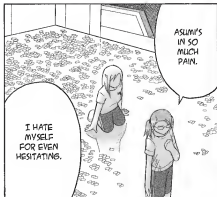
HEY!
WHERE
ARE YOU
GOING?



WAIT,
ASUMI!







I HATE
MYSELF
FOR EVEN
HESITATING.

ASUMI'S
IN SO
MUCH
PAIN.

I REALLY
SHOULD'VE
PRESSED IT
EARLIER.



I
WOULD
FAIL
AS A
HUMAN
BEING.

I CAN'T
PASS THIS
TEST WHILE
SOMEONE
ELSE
SUFFERS.

I'D
ONLY
REGRET
IT.

...
DON'T
GET
ALL
POETIC.









THAT'S
ALL.

THAT'S
MY
ONLY
DREAM.



THE
ONLY
THINGS
I EVER
WANTED
WAS
TO GET
CLOSE
TO
THEM.



SINCE
I WAS
LITTLE

I'VE
LOVED
LOOKING
AT THE
STARS.



I WANT
TO KEEP
GOING,
JUST
A LITTLE
LONGER.

I WANT
TO KEEP ON,
WITH YOU
AND WITH
MISS UKITA.



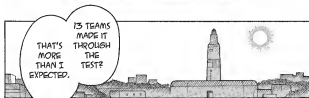
SORRY
TO WORRY
YOU,
KEI.

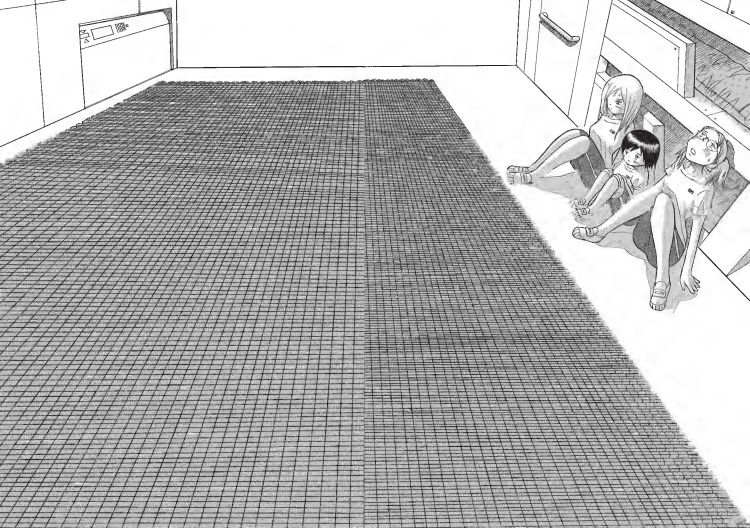
BUT
I DON'T
WANT
TO
GIVE UP.

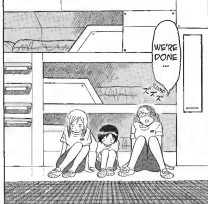












STARING
AT THE
STARS,
TOO.

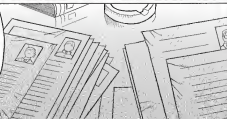
I SPENT
MY
CHILDHOOD

EVEN
THOUGH



THESE ARE
ALL THE
EXAMINEES
THAT
PASSED?

YES.





CONTINUED IN TWIN SPICA VOL. 2



JAPAN'S
FIRST
MANNED
ROCKET
LAUNCH,
"THE LION,"
ENDED IN
FAILURE.



MANY
BYSTANDERS
WERE
INJURED OR
KILLED
AS WELL.

THE FLIGHT-STOP
SYSTEM FAILED TO
ACTIVATE, AND
THE ROCKET
CRASHED IN
THE MIDDLE OF
A CITY.
THE ENTIRE
CREW
PERISHED.



THAT
WAS

5 YEARS
AGO.

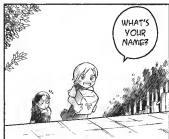












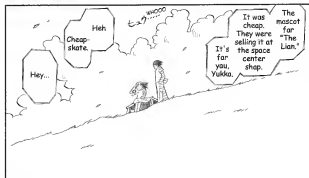


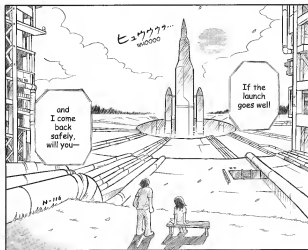










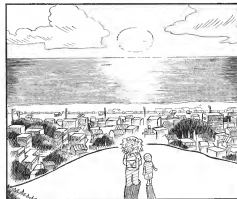




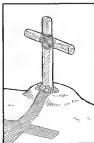






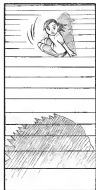


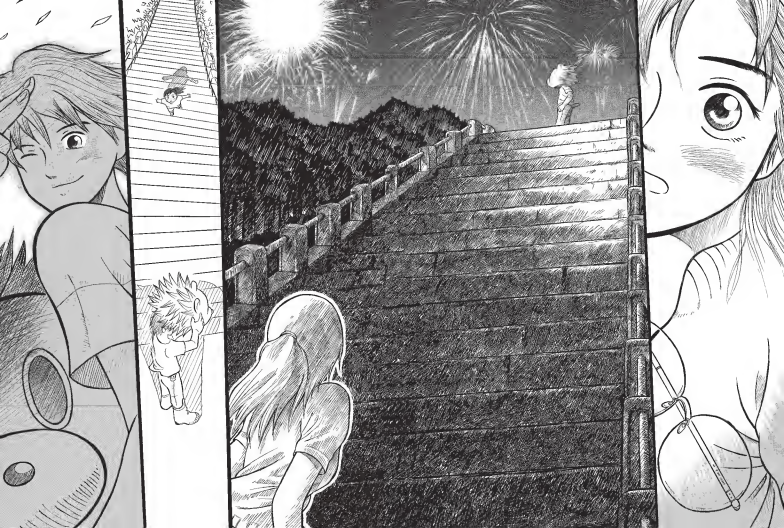






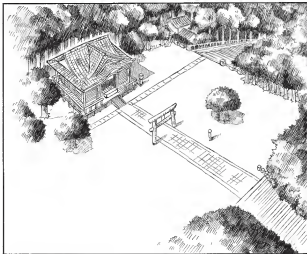


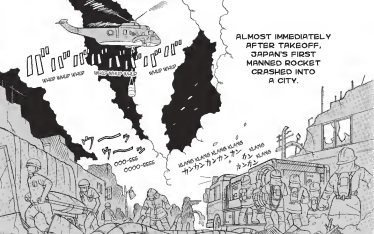












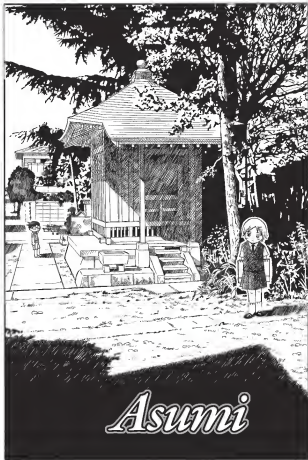
ALMOST IMMEDIATELY
AFTER TAKEOFF,
JAPAN'S FIRST
MANNED ROCKET
CRASHED INTO
A CITY.

MANY
BYSTANDERS
WERE INJURED
OR KILLED.

EVERYONE ON
BOARD DIED.



THAT WAS
5 YEARS AGO.



Asumi









WHERE DO
PEOPLE GO
WHEN THEY
DIE?



WHY?
CAN'T SLEEP?



DAD?



AND THEN
THEY
REACH
THE SANZU
RIVER.

THAT THEIR
SPIRITS TRAVEL
OVER THE
MOUNTAINS,
ACROSS GREAT
PLAINS, THROUGH
DEEP FORESTS

I READ
IN A BOOK
SOMEWHERE

UHM,
WELL...



...OR WAS THAT
TOO HARD?

THEN GOD
APPEARS ON THE
OTHER SIDE OF
THE RIVER AND
BECKONS THEM
TO CROSS



I GUESS SHE'S
NEARING THE
SANZU RIVER
ABOUT NOW.

OH,
TOMORROW'S
THE 49TH DAY
SINCE SHE DIED.





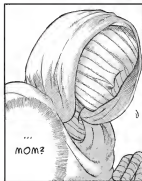










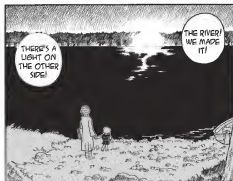




















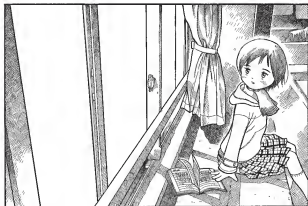








ANOTHER SPICA



KOU YAGINUMA

and press them
to make
fresh orange juice.
That was
my main job.

360
YEN.



Every day
I would wash
many boxes
of oranges
in cold water

I was working
part-time at
a certain theme
park on Tokyo Bay.



One year,
when I was
still in
school,



SPEAK
FOR YOUR-
SELF,
BUDDY.



PRETTY
OBVIOUS
YOU DON'T
HAVE
A GIRL IF
YOU'RE
WORKING.

THAT'S
MY LINE!



I REALLY
DON'T WANT
TO SPEND NEXT
CHRISTMAS EVE
WITH YOU,
YABINUMA.

TIME
FLIES.
THE
YEAR'S
ALMOST
OVER.



Then, later on when
the place was mostly
deserted...

HM?



We weren't
very busy at night,
so I usually
worked alone.



'KAY,
SEE
YA!



Notes on the Translation

P. 64

When the author started this series, astronomy books gave the distance to Spica as 350 light-years. Current estimates, however, are in the 200 light-years. In the near future when this story takes place, who knows what the figure will be?



P. 161

Sanzu River is the Japanese equivalent of the River Styx. The 49th day after a person's death is believed to be when the spirit crosses into the afterlife.



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"Asumi" first published in Gekkan Comic Flapper,

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Admitted to the prestigious Tokyo Space School, Asumi appears to be on track to make her dreams come true. However, enrollment was just the first of many trials she must overcome on her path to the stars.

Praise for *Twin Spica*

"It's easy to see why the series was a smash hit in its native land... The relationship between father and daughter is very moving, and Asumi's interaction with her equally ambitious schoolmates is also compelling stuff... Each page contains more genuine emotion than an entire space fleet's worth of similarly themed stories. Opening with a strong introductory volume, this series shows great promise and bodes well for future installments." — *PuMatters Weekly*

"I knew *Twin Spica* was going to be good from when Vertical first announced its license deal. I didn't realize just how good it would be... The single-page panels, or the two-page spreads, carry with them a sense of gravity and awe that forces you to stop and inspect all the details in Yaginuma's amazingly clean artwork... Some of the conflict [in the first volume] had me crying almost uncontrollably. I had to put the manga down and walk away from it for a good while because of how hard it hit me." — *Japanator*

